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ABSTRACT

One of 52 theoretical papers on school crime and its relation to poverty, this chapter proposes that school crime and disruption be conceptualized as a function of the congruence or fit between the personal characteristics of individual students and the social environments of the schools they attend. In developing a conceptual model, a selective review of the literature on juvenile delinquency is presented, identifying substantive and methodological strengths and weaknesses of past and current approaches. Second, the prerequisites for an adequate theory of delinquent behavior are specified, followed by a general description of a model of person-environment fit. Third, the relation of this model to delinquent behavior and school crime is described, emphasizing the importance of the school experience and specifying the major components of the model by reference to the school context. Fourth, the model is applied to selected theories and empirical results available from the current literature on delinquency and school crime, and data from two recent studies of adolescents are presented that lend support to the model and emphasize the unitary relationship between school crime or disruption and delinquent behavior in general. Finally, based on the preceding discussion, some general implications and conclusions are drawn. (Author/MLF)

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SCHOOL CRIME AS A FUNCTION OF PERSON-ENVIRONMENT FIT

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we propose that school crime and disruption be conceptualized as a function of the congruence or fit between the personal characteristics of individual students and the social environments of the schools they attend. In developing a conceptual model, we first present a selective review of the literature on juvenile delinquency, identifying substantive and methodological strengths and weaknesses of past and current approaches for the purpose of informing our conceptual model. Second, the prerequisites for an adequate theory of delinquent behavior are specified, followed by a general description of a model of person-environment fit. Third, the relation of this model to delinquent behavior and school crime is described, emphasizing the importance of the school experience and specifying the major components of the model by reference to the school context. Fourth, the model is applied to selected theories and empirical results available from the current literature on delinquency and school crime, and data from two recent studies of adolescents are presented which lend support to the model and emphasize the unitary relationship between school crime or disruption and delinquent behavior in general. Finally, based on the preceding discussion, some general implications and conclusions are drawn.

Introduction

Of rapidly growing concern to members of the educational community in recent years has been the alarming trend toward greater violence, vandalism, disruption, and crime in our nation's schools. Although lack of a uniform national reporting system for school related crime and wide variation in accuracy of reporting make it virtually impossible to determine the exact number of crimes committed in our schools, recent evidence from a variety of sources leaves little doubt that school crime has become a serious and at times critical problem for education in the United States.

School vandalism alone has been called "a national epidemic, and the contagion seems to be outrunning any hope of cure" (Demarest, 1973). Based on extensive hearings and a nationwide survey of 757 school systems enrolling approximately half of the public elementary and secondary students in the nation, the Senate Subcommittee on juvenile delinquency has estimated that vandalism in public schools is now costing taxpayers almost $600 million a year--more than was spent for textbooks in 1972 and enough to hire 50,000 more teachers--and indications are that the cost is rising rapidly (Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, 1975, 1976a, 1976b, 1977). Further, although many schools

do not yet have serious crime problems, schools in rural and in affluent suburban areas, as well as those in urban settings, are experiencing more frequent and intense problems in this regard (Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, 1977).

Because the marked escalation of school violence, vandalism, and crime has occurred essentially during the past five to ten years, most efforts to study the problem of crime in schools are of quite recent vintage, and writings on this topic have been decidedly uneven. Most recent work on school violence and crime has consisted of descriptions of the incidence or seriousness of the problem and/or the availability and efficacy of various design, security, and practical reform strategies. Such work is usually based either on descriptive surveys (Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, 1976b), or, more frequently, on informal insights and the anecdotal or testimonial evidence of educational practitioners and interested observers (McPartland & McDill, 1977). In contrast, in spite of an enormous research literature on the etiology of juvenile crime in general, including a growing collection of studies which explore the relationship between school experience and delinquent behavior (e.g., Polk & Schafer, 1972; Schafer & Polk, 1967; Wenk, 1974; West, 1975) and on the sources of general student misbehavior

(e.g., Bachman, 1970; Polk, 1969; Stinchcombe, 1964), rigorious studies which focus specifically on the nature and causes of criminal behavior in the school context are almost nonexistent (exceptions include Bailey, 1970; Cardinell, 1969; Goldman, 1961; Greenberg, 1975; McPartland & McDill, 1977).

While this paucity of systematic research on school crime is indeed unfortunate from the viewpoint of educational practitioners, it presents an opportunity rare in the annals of social science: the opportunity systematically to conceptualize the problem in both theoretical and concrete terms prior to engaging in extensive research or broad-scale interventions. Far too often in behavioral research conceptual analysis is attempted only after a substantial mass of empirical data has accumulated in the area of interest; this is an unfortunate sequence indeed, since "conceptual frameworks largely determine what we look for and what we find" (Strauss, 1974b). Therefore, the selection of an appropriate conceptual model may be considered the fundamental task in our effort to understand school crime, and this paper is devoted to that task.

In developing a conceptual model for the study of school crime, we have taken the following approach: First, we present a selective review of the literature on juvenile delinquency, identifying substantive and methodological

strengths and weaknesses of past and current approaches to the problem for the purpose of informing our conceptual model. Second, the prerequisites for an adequate theory of delinquent behavior are specified, followed by a general description of a model of person-environment fit. Third, the relation of this model to delinquent behavior and school crime is described, emphasizing the importance of the school experience and specifying the major components of the model by reference to the school context. Fourth, the model is applied to selected theories and to empirical results available from the current literature on delinquency and school crime. Finally, based on the preceding discussion, some general conclusions and implications are presented.

A Selective Review of Delinquency Theory and Research

We have chosen to approach the conceptual task of constructing a theory of school crime via consideration of a similar problem area, that of juvenile delinquency. The case remains to be made that delinquent behavior and school crime can be considered jointly as facets of a unitary phenomenon. It is clear, however, that delinquency in school is at least a subset of delinquent behavior in general. As such, the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the

delinquency literature should inform the construction of a theory of school crime and disruption. With this in mind, we shall briefly review some major themes of the literature on delinquency.

There is a longstanding and growing debate concerning the appropriate measurement of delinquency (see, e.g., Elliott & Voss, 1974; Gibbons, 1970; Gibbs & Erickson, 1975; Hirschi, 1969). Some researchers, for logistical or theoretical reasons, use police and court records of delinquency (e.g., McCord & McCord, 1959; Wolfgang, Figlio, & Sellin, 1972), while others rely on self-report measures of deliquent behavior (e.g., Nye & Short, 1957; Williams & Gold, 1972; see also Hardt & Bodine, 1965).

There are several important distinctions between the two approaches. Use of official records constrains the researcher to treat delinquency as a dichotomous attribute, i.e., present or absent; self-report techniques yield a continuum on which an individual's degree of delinquent behavior can be located. Official records show a marked socioeconomic bias (e.g., Akers, 1964; Piliavin & Briar, 1964; Nye, Short, & Olsen, 1958), leaving the impression that the behavior is concentrated in the lowest strate of society. In contrast, self-report measures show a relatively even distribution of delinquent

behavior across social strata and suggest a much greater incidence and prevalence of the behavior than do official records (e.g., Gibbons, 1970; Gold & Reimer, 1975; Hardt & Bodine, 1965; Hirschi, 1969; Johnson, 1976; Mann, 1976). Despite some controversy on this issue, it appears to us that the validity and accuracy of self-report measures of delinquent behavior have been established (see especially Gold, 1966; Hirschi, 1969).

The implications of this position are direct. Theories of delinquency which assume a class-or structure-bound distribution of delinquent behavior (e.g., Cloward & Ohlin, 1960; Cohen, 1955; Lander, 1954; Miller, 1958; Shaw & McKay, 1942; Sutherland & Cressey, 1966; Vaz, 1967) are not sufficiently general to account for the occurrence of the phenomenon throughout society (see also Becker, 1963; Gibbs & Erickson, 1975; Gove, 1975; Hirschi, 1975). Thus, generality with respect to social class is one attribute we should require of our model.

However, the literature suggests generality with respect to other attributes as well. Much attention has been paid to the possibility of specialization in types and targets of delinquent behavior (e.g., Cohen, 1973; Cloward & Ohlin, 1960; Cohen & Short, 1958; Dentler & Monroe, 1961; Short & Strodtbeck, 1965). Cloward and

Ohlin's theory, for example, was based on a tripartite taxonomy of subtypes of delinquency. It appears,however, that these notions of organization and specialization do not reflect the reality of delinquent behavior. Research contradicts the assumption that delinquent behavior emanates from organized, homogeneous groups (Clark & Wenninger, 1962; Gold, 1970; Reiss & Rhodes, 1961; Short, 1964; Yablonsky, 1959; 1966), and assumed specialization in delinquency fares no better. Delinquent behavior appears to be inconsistent and sporadic, rather than amenable to stable classification by frequency, type, and companions (Erickson & Empey, 1963; Gold, 1970; Williams & Gold, 1972). Thus generality with respect to the kinds and settings of criminal or disruptive behavior in which adolescents might engage is another desirable attribute of the model.

The sociological literature on delinquency has recently taken a turn away from strict class or structural explanations of the phenomenon, largely because of the earlier failures just reviewed (Cohen, 1965; Short, 1964). The remedy prescribed was to conceptualize delinquent behavior as the result of individual adaptations to particular needs, conditions, and circumstances. This view

is presaged by Cloward (1959), Cohen (1955, 1965), and Short (1964) in their work stimulated by Merton's original conception of adaptation to structurally induced means-ends strain (Merton, 1957; 1959).

This perspective is most completely set forth, however, in control theories of delinquent behavior (e.g., Hirschi, 1969; Johnson, 1975). This approach suggests a conceptualiztion of delinquent behavior free from class and structural limitations and able to account for maturational reform (Matza, 1964). Its basis is essentially a cost-benefit analysis of degree of attachment to conventional society and, commensurately, adherence or lack thereof to normative prescriptions in seeking rewards and gratifications (Briar & Piliavin, 1965; Hirschi, 1969; cf. Karacki & Toby, 1962; Miller, 1958). It falls short of adequate explanation, however, failing by its own admission (see Hirschi, 1969, pp. 230-231) to take sufficient account of the needs and motivations of adolescents which arise from transactions with the sociocultural environment (see also Empey & Erickson, 1972; Gold, 1970; Gold & Mann, 1972; Kaplan, 1975; Mann, 1976; Reckless, 1962; Tangri & Schwartz, 1967).

The Need for a General Model

Given the foregoing, several points emerge as salient in considering the attributes to be included in a con-

ceptual model of generality sufficient to account for delinquent behavior of all types as well as delinquency and disruption in the school setting. First, the model should be congruent with the generality of delinquent behavior across socioeconomic strata. Second, its explanatory power should be robust across the range of types of delinquency, however they may be categorized, and it should be robust with respect to the settings of delinquent behavior and to the objects against which the behavior appears to be directed. Third, it should be general with respect to age--or at least to delinquencies performed by those similar in their stage of progression through adolescence. Since age differences do seem to pattern the distribution of delinquency and delinquent behavior (Gibbons, 1970; Mann, 1976; Wolfgang, Figlio, & Sellin, 1972), the model should be able to account for these differences. Fourth, the model should be capable of identifying and addressing the range of motives and needs which may lead to delinquent behavior. Finally, generality with respect to sex is also called for, though the determinants of girls' delinquent behavior have largely been ignored.

In short, the model must account for the broadest possible range of research evidence on juvenile crime,

and, not incidentally, also be able to account for nondelinquent behavior. The type of theory required, in our view, is a multilevel, interactive, behavioral model (Yinger, 1965), a schema which provides a general characterization of the interaction and interdependence between individuals and social settings. That is, delinquent behavior, like the study of any other human response or behavior, should be considered as a function of the interaction of personal characteristics of adolescents and characteristics of the social environments they inhabit or situations they confront. Although this "principle of interaction" (Sells, 1963) has a distinguished history in social psychology (Ekehammar, 1974; Lewin, 1935, 1951; Murray, 1938) and has received widespread acceptance in recent years (Bowers, 1973; Halleck, 1975; D. E. Hunt, 1975b; J. M. Hunt, 1965; Inkeles & Levinson, 1963; Mitchell, 1969; Sells, 1963; Vale & Vale, 1969; Yinger, 1965), the real challenges lie in specifying the precise representation of the person and the environment and in determining the function or law which links those elements to behavior (Lewin, 1951). Increasingly, social theorists have turned to a conceptualization of person-environment congruence or fit to specify the nature of that relationship.

Models of person-environment congruence have now emerged in virtually every major area of social research (e.g., Feather, 1975; French, Rodgers, & Cobb, 1974a, 1974b; Getzels, 1969; Kahana, 1975b; Lawler, 1973; Locke, 1969; Moos, 1974; Pervin, 1968; Stern, 1970; Veroff & Feld, 1970), and a large number of studies conducted in diverse social settings suggest that the fit between person and social environment may be an important predictor of physical or psychological well-being and of maladaptive behavior (e.g., Beck & Cassell, 1972; Carp, 1968; Coburn, 1975; Feather, 1972, 1975; Felton, 1975; Harrison, 1976b; Kahana, 1975a; Kulka, 1976; Morse, 1975; Moos, 1974; O'Reilly, 1977; Parker & Kleiner, 1966; Pervin, 1967a, 1967b; Seybolt, 1976; VandenBerg, 1975; Veroff & Feld, 1970; Wanous & Lawler, 1972). Nevertheless, to our knowledge, no theories or studies exist which conceptualize delinquent behavior as a function of person-environment congruence or fit. (For an extensive review and critique of theory and research on person-environment congruence, see Kulka, 1976).

A Model of Person-Environment Fit

Although a number of promising theories of person-environment congruence are available, the model we propose for the conceptualization of delinquent behavior is based

on the quantitative schema developed by French, Rodgers, and Cobb (1974a, 1974b). This appears flexible enough to incorporate essential features of the others and sufficiently comprehensive to account for much of the data already at hand and for future results. The basic assumption of the model, which has now been elaborated in a number of papers (Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison & Pinneau, 1975; French, 1973; French, Rodgers, & Cobb, 1974a, 1974b; Harrison, 1976b, Kulka, 1976), is that adjustment may be conceived of as the goodness-of-fit-between characteristics of the person and properties of his or her environment. As one concept of adjustment or stress, person-environment fit may be viewed as an important predictor of psychological strain and other indicators of mental health, including various forms of adaptive or maladaptive behavior produced in response to strain.

The theory may be described in terms of a few basic concepts. First, the model proposes four basic elements: (a) the objective environment, the environment as it exists independently of the person's perceptions of it; (b) the subjective environment, the person's perceptions and cognitions of relevant aspects of his or her objective environment; (c) the objective person, to the objectively demonstrable characteristics of the person independent of his or her perceptions; and (d) the subjective person, the individual's perceptions or cognitions of his or her

objective characteristics (i.e., self-concept or self-identity). Employing these four elements, the model distinguishes between subjective person-environment fit, where botn characteristics of the person and the environment are assessed as perceived and reported by the person, and objective person-environment fit, where both components are measured independent of the person's perceptions and cognitions of them.

Second, the schema proposes that for both objective and subjective P-E fit there are two basic subtypes, describable in terms of two sorts of demands and two corresponding forms of supplies to meet these demands. The motives (needs or values) of the person represent one type of demand which may or may not be met by environmental supplies in the form of opportunities for gratification. The other form of demand emanates from the environment in terms of role demands or requirements, where the supplies to meet such demands consist of the skills or abilities of the person. Thus, strain may result from misfit either between environmental demands and an individual's abilities to meet them or between an individual's needs or values and environmental resources to gratify these motives, with either form of misfit being conceived of as a manifestation of social stress.

Third, corresponding demands and supplies in each pair are to be conceptualized along commensurate dimensions and measured using the same units of measurement (after Lewin, 1951). Thus conceptualized and measured, person-environment fit may be precisely quantified as the algebraic discrepancy or difference between corresponding demands and supplies. Although not critical to the model, measures of fit are generally constructed so that positive values indicate excessive supplies while negative values indicate deficiencies.

Hypothesized relationships between various dimensions of person-environment fit and strains are generally represented by one of three hypothetical functions, as illustrated in Figure 1. Curve A illustrates a monotonic curvilinear relationship between size of deficiency for a particular resource or ability and a given measure of strain, with excess of either environmental or personal supplies having no influence on the level of strain. Thus, the curve of strain plotted against person-environment fit decreases as the magnitude of deficiency decreases, reaching an asymptote at perfect fit and showing no further changes with increasing excesses of supplies. For example, a thirsty man will drink until he has quenched his thirst, beyond which additional supplies of water would not result in greater satiation.

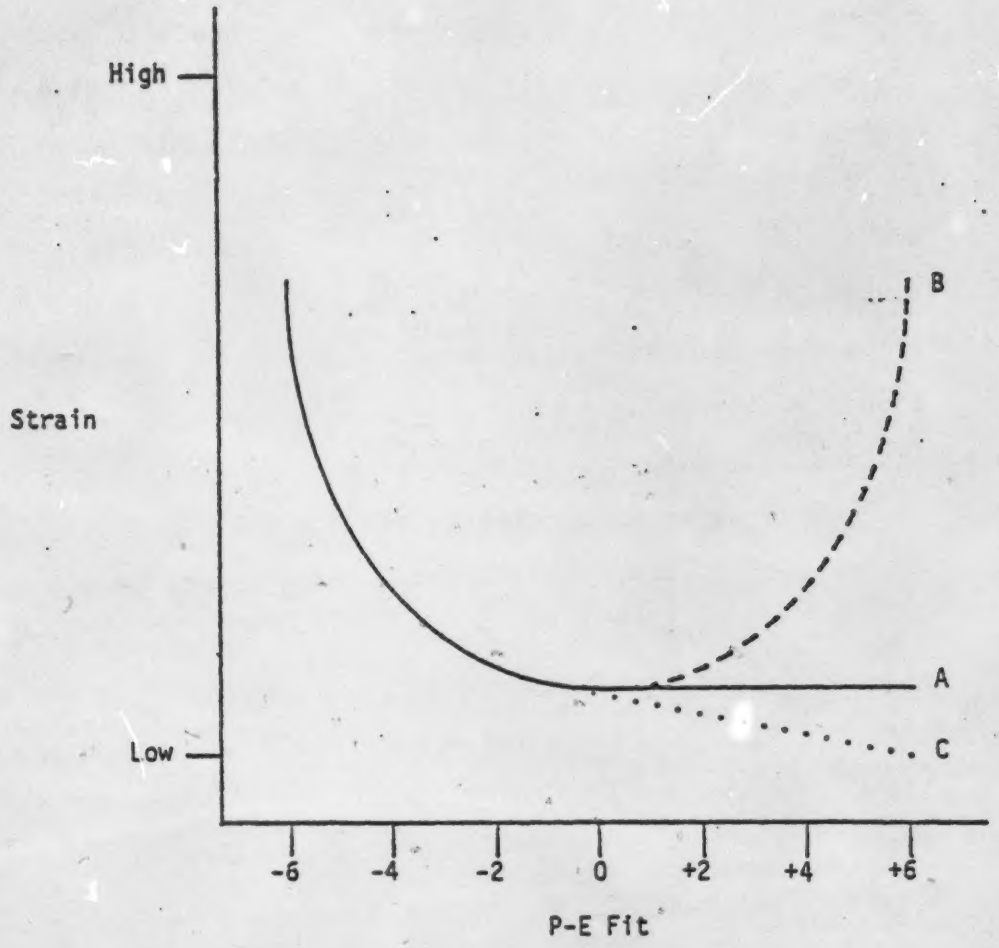

Figure 1. Three hypothetical person-environment fit curves. The hypothesized relationship between P-E fit and psychological strain as adapted from French, Rodgers, and Cobb (1974b).

In contrast, the other two curves reflect hypotheses which suggest that excess supplies or abilities will make a difference. In one instance (Curve B) the relationship between fit and strain is U-shaped, strain being lowest at the point of perfect fit, but rising with increases in either deficiency or excess. This type of relationship is proposed where two or more important motives are involved and the presence of excess supplies for one motive may result in deficient supplies for another. For example, if academic abilities are exceeded by teacher demands, strain would result as in Curve A. However, as abilities increasingly exceed demands, boredom, apathy, or resentment may result as a consequence of the frustration of lack of opportunity to use a valued skill. A similar example may be used to illustrate the hypothesis suggested by Curve C, whereby excess supplies may result in decreased levels of strain. Such relationships are posited when excess supplies for one motive can be used directly as (or exchanged for) supplies for other motives. Accordingly, students whose reading abilities exceed the level of difficulty of materials used for reading instruction may show fewer behavioral symptoms of strain than those whose ability matches the material because a variety of other rewards (e.g., teacher praise, grades) may be associated with that relationship

(Jorgenson, 1977). Empirical relationships approximating each of these three hypothetical functions have been reported in recent studies by Harrison (1976b), Kulka (1976), and Caplan, et al. (1975).

Although this concludes our brief summary of the P-E fit model, the schema also defines some additional conceptions of mental health and provides a comprehensive discussion of the dynamics of adjustment (i.e., coping and defense) using the same basic elements described here. For a more detailed description of the theory the reader is referred to French, Rodgers, and Cobb (1974a, 1974b), Harrison (1976), or Kulka (1976). We now turn to a more direct specification of the model with respect to the study of delinquent behavior and school crime.

The Importance of the School Context

A general model of person-environment fit applied to the problem of delinquent behavior or school crime should ideally include a description of the broad range of institutions confronted by children and adolescents. However, because space does not permit such comprehensiveness, we propose to illustrate the nature and utility of the model with respect to delinquent behavior by focusing on one major social institution: the school. While acknowledging the suitability and desirability of applying the model to non-

school social environments, we have chosen to focus on the school experience for a number of important reasons.

First, school absorbs a considerable portion of children's time and energy (Campbell, 1969). Second, the school is now widely recognized as the major public institution for the socialization of the legitimate goals and values of society (Coleman, et al. 1966; Elkin, 1960; Getzels, 1976; Himmelweit & Swift, 1969; Lidz, 1968). It is also generally accepted that schools have a salient role in facilitating or hindering the development of maturity and mental health among students (Drews, 1966; James, 1973; McNabola, 1961; Miller, 1974; Sugarman, 1973).

Third, the school serves as the first significant institution which differentiates children on the basis of earned status and achievement, as opposed to ascriptive or particularistic criteria characteristic of family relationships (e.g., Ansubel, 1970; Lidz, 1968; Rhodes & Reiss, 1969). Thus, schools provide the most pervasive form of competition among students, and success and failure in this competition are both clear and of critical importance to students and their parents, regardless of social class (Coleman, et al., 1966; Gold, 1963; McDill & Coleman, 1963; Rosenberg, 1967).

Fourth, as noted in our introduction, a large body of empirical research suggests the critical importance of school experiences, involvements, and performance in the prediction

of disruptive, rebellious, and delinquent behavior (Erickson, Scott, & Empey, 1964; Glaser, 1975; Klingel, 1974; Polk & Schafer, 1972; Schafer & Polk, 1967; Wenk, 1974; West, 1975). Specific variables found to be associated with such nonconforming behavior include truancy (Reiss & Rhodes, 1959a; Senna, Rathus, & Siegel, 1974; Walberg, 1972), dropping out (Bachman, Green, & Wirtanen, 1971; Cervantes, 1965; Elliott & Voss, 1974), curriculum tracking (Hargreaves, 1967; Kelly, 1974, 1975; Schafer & Olexa, 1971; Stinchcombe, 1964), educational or occupational aspirations (Caplan, 1974; Gold, 1963; Hirschi, 1969; Reiss & Rhodes, 1959b), student perceptions of school relevance (Elliott, 1962; Pearl, 1965; Short, 1964; Stinchcombe, 1964), sanctioning systems and school record-keeping procedures (Lederer, 1971; Vinter & Sarri, 1965), extra-curricular involvement (Hirschi, 1969; Polk & Halferty, 1966; Schafer, 1969), attitudes toward school (Bachman, 1970; Gold, 1963; Hirschi, 1969), school misconduct or adjustment (Ferracutti & Dinitz, 1974; Glueck & Glueck, 1950; Senna, et al., 1974), student commitment to school (Kelly & Pink, 1973; Thomas, Kreps, & Cage, 1977), and academic performance (Empey & Ludbeck, 1971; Gold, 1963, 1970; Hirschi, 1969; Kaplan, 1975; Kelly, 1971; Mann, 1976; Noblit, 1976; Polk, Frease, & Richmond, 1974; Rhodes & Reiss, 1969). Thus,

Elliott and Voss (1974) have concluded that "school is the critical social context for the generation of delinquent behavior [emphasis added]" (p. 204), and Glaser (1975, p. 45) has suggested that an even closer relationship between lack of gratification in the school experience and adolescent crime may be developing in recent years because differentiation of society has increased the relevance of school to adult life.

A Student School Fit Model of School Crime

Having established that school occupies a particularly salient and strategic place in the lives of youth, we are now in a position to articulate a more specific model of the theoretical relationship between school crime and person-environment fit by reference to the school environment. The major components of one such model are represented in Figure 2, where we propose a conceptualization of school-related delinquency (as a subset of delinquent behavior in general) which treats the problem as a behavioral response to various forms of psychological strain engendered by the school experience. On the one hand are the strains of self-denigration, anxiety, etc., resulting from failure to meet school-related role demands. On the other are the strains of dissatisfaction and alienation resulting from the persistent frustration of the salient needs or values of students.

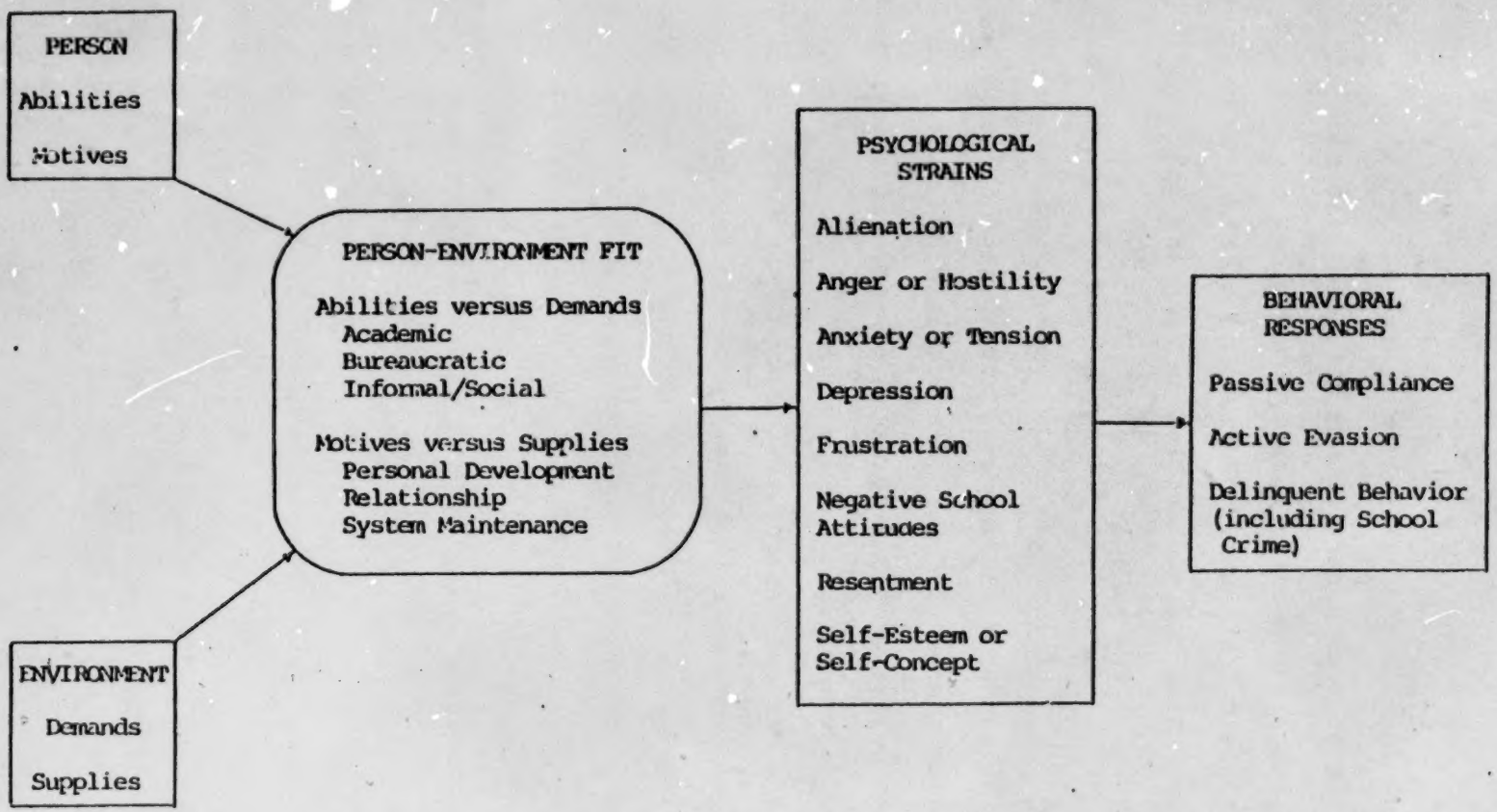

Figure 2. A simplified model of the relationship between person-environment fit and school crime.

Given this basic distinction between two major categories of person-environment fit, the selection of salient dimensions within each type requires that we ask what are the major tasks, dilemmas, or problems of adaptation which confront adolescents in the social environment of the school?

Ability-Demand Dimensions

As illustrated in Figure 2, three main categories of role requirements--academic, bureaucratic, and informal/social--appear especially relevant to the measurement of person-environment fit in the school.

The first two categories in large part form the core of what is commonly called the "student role," which Douvan and Gold (1966) describe as "one of the two or three most important roles which [a youngster] is called upon to play" (p. 500). Since students and their parents are keenly aware of the importance of academic achievement for future success (Coleman, et al., 1966; Gold, 1963; Vinter & Sarri, 1965), the salience of a number of innate or acquired skills or abilities and their corresponding demands is perhaps obvious. However, achievement in the student role is not measured only in terms of skills and information, but also in terms of "proper" behavior (Boocock, 1972; Grambs,1965; Henry, 1955, 1963; Schafer, 1967). Also important, according to Jackson (1968), Silberman (1971),

and others is the "hidden curriculum": a morass of rules, regulations and procedures designed to mold individual behavior to the demands of institutional living. These demands achieve centrality and motivational significance by virtue of being linked to the same reward system as that of the official academic curriculum. Together these components represent what Walberg (1972) has called the "bureaucratic student role."

Nevertheless, as Douvan and Gold (1966) have emphasized, the high school "is not only an adolescent's place of work; it is also his club" (p. 501), a setting where adolescents can meet their friends (of both sexes) and participate in a wide variety of formal and informal social and extracurricular activities. Coleman (1961), Gordon (1957), and others (see Boocock, 1972) have emphasized the powerful impact of a dominant peer value system based on popularity, athletics, and social leadership skills.

Motive-Supply Dimensions

In general, most of the important dimensions relevant to the congruence between student motives and characteristics of the school environment appear to be subsumable under three broad categories of social climate dimensions described by Insel and Moos (1974): (1) personal development dimensions (e.g., independence, autonomy, achievement, self-development, etc.); (2) relationship dimensions (e.g.,

affiliation, involvement, teacher support, etc.); and (3) system maintenance or system change dimensions (e.g., order and organization, rule clarity, student influence, teacher control, etc.). Consequently, the selection of motive-supply dimensions of person-environment fit from each of these categories should provide a reasonably complete picture of congruence in this area, as shown in Figure 2.

Perhaps the best known dimension of personal development is represented by the achievement motive, generally conceived of as a disposition to do well relative to some internalized standard of excellence (Atkinson, 1958, 1964; Atkinson & Feather, 1966). Needs and opportunities for recognition and social status represent a related set of personal development dimensions salient to the school, with the impact of peer status having already been noted above (Coleman, 1961; Gordon, 1957). Also relevant here is the basic dialectic between preoccupation of schools with order and control (Friedenberg, 1963, 1965; C. Silberman, 1970; M. Silberman, 1971) and the striving of the adolescent for independence and autonomy (Buxton, 1973; Douvan & Adelson, 1966). Related to the autonomy dimension is the issue of "relevance" (Buxton, 1973; Fish, 1970), perhaps the major catchword among students during the last 10 years. Students of widely ranging abilities and aims stress the need to be

able to see some point, some purpose, some future in their schoolwork (Mallery, 1962); yet in many schools and for a large number of students many school activities are ireelevant, distasteful, and of little value (Grambs, 1965; Guskin & Guskin, 1970; Johnson, 1970; Stinchcombe, 1964). Finally, personal development clearly incorporates dimensions of self-utilization and self-development in general (see, e.g., Argyris, 1957; Bachman, Kahn, Mednick, Davidson, & Johnston, 1967; Long, 1968; Maslow, 1954).

Relationship dimensions reflect the degree of person-environment fit with respect to interpersonal relationships and supportiveness. With respect to the school environment, the important relationship dimensions appear to involve needs and opportunities for affiliation with peers and for supportive relationships with teachers. The importance of attaining and maintaining close relationships with peers has been heavily emphasized (perhaps overemphasized) in the literature on adolescents and the high school (Buxton, 1973; Coleman, 1961; Douvan & Adelson, 1966; Gordon, 1957; Rosenberg, 1965). Similarly, teacher-student relationships have important consequences (Brophy & Good, 1974; Minuchin, et al., 1969; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Silberman,1971). A number of investigations have reported strong student needs for teacher sensitivity, encouragement, priase, support, and trust (e.g., Imber, 1973; Mallery, 1962; Stron, 1968; Webb, 1967), as well as for being treated by teachers with

courtesy, respect, and concern for them as individuals (Buxton, 1973; Guskin & Guskin, 1970).

System maintenance and system change dimensions concern the organization and operation of the school. Several studies have indicated that the particular style employed for establishing and maintaining control may affect student behavior, attitudes, and perceptions of teachers (e.g., Alexander, Epson, Means, & Means, 1971; Cogan, 1958; Getzels, 1969; Stern, 1963). A related set of dimensions concerns opportunities and student motivations for the exercise of influence or power, with the major area of potential conflict involving the distribution of decision-making power among students and school personnel. Although the growing literature on this issue tends to be more evocative than firmly grounded in empirical research (e.g., Chesler & Lohman, 1971; Farber, 1969; Friedenberg, 1963, 1965; Guskin & Guskin, 1970; Wittes, 1970), "there is little doubt that pressures for greater participation in the school decision-making process are growing in strength and that the proportion of students who have opinions on the subject of their own education is increasing" (Boocock, 1972, p. 185).

Psychological Strains and Behavioral Responses

Figure 2 also emphasizes that the stress engendered by poor fit with respect to the school environment may lead to several types of psychological strain, which in turn may

induce various behavioral responses designed to alleviate such strain. Although we are not able here definitively to enumerate the psychological strains which may intervene between person-environment incongruence and delinquent behavior, previous theoretical reasoning and research evidence suggest that one or more of the following variables may fit into this process: (a) alienation (Elliott & Voss, 1974; Gold, 1969; Sarata, 1976; Thomas, et al., 1977; VandenBerg, 1975), (b) anger or hostility (Bachman, 1970; Brenton, 1975; Stott, 1964), (c) anxiety or tension (Empey & Lubeck, 1971; Gold, 1978; Rhodes & Reiss, 1969), (d) depression (Bachman, 1970; Chwast, 1974; Klingel, 1973), (e) frustration (Cohen, 1955; Demarest, 1973; Vinter & Sarri, 1965), (f) negative school attitudes (Ferracutti & Dinitz, 1974; Gold, 1963; Havighurst, Bowman, Liddle, Matthews, & Pierce, 1962; Hirschi, 1969), (g) resentment (Glueck & Glueck, 1950; McNeil, Morse, & Ketcham, 1966; Walberg, 1972), and (h) self-esteem or self-concept (Gold & Mann, 1972; Jensen, 1972,1973; Kelly & Balch, 1971; Mann, 1976; Reckless, Dinitz, & Murray, 1956; Reckless & Dinitz, 1967; Tangri & Schwartz, 1967). Thus, for the link between school performance and delinquency, Hirschi (1969) suggests that "the causal chain runs from academic incompetence to poor school performance to disliking school

to rejection of the school's authority to the commission of delinquent acts" (p. 132), and Sarata (1976) suggests that alienation - reduction be adopted as the paradigm for delinquency reduction, with alienation defined as the "disintegration of relations between the person and one or more aspects of his environment" (p. 124).

In turning to a consideration of behavioral responses to these various types of psychological strain, we wish to emphasize the "principle of multiple possibilities" (Yinger, 1965). To paraphrase Yinger, delinquent behavior is clearly not the inevitable consequence of person-environment incongruence in general or of any form of psychological strain. Individuals react to strain in a number of ways, some of them conforming, some not. Out of a variety of possible adaptations, we have chosen to emphasize in Figure 2 three similar to those suggested by Rhodes and Reiss (1969): (a) passive compliance (i.e., resigned acceptance of the situation), (b) active evasion (truancy or dropping out), and (c) delinquent, rebellious, or disruptive behavior (including school crime). Finally, although Figure 2 emphasizes only the negative consequences of person-environment incongruence (i.e., poor P-E fit), the continued experience of person-environment congruence (i.e., good P-E fit), is assumed to produce positive outcomes, including increased sense of worth, well-being,

and involvement, as well as the absence of psychological strain and maladaptive behavior.

Support for the Model

The person-environment fit model of school crime articulated here has a number of desirable features. First, the schema defines the relevant phenomena in terms of a few basic quantifiable elements and specifies the relationship among them. Second, the quantifiability of elements and the possibility of concrete predictions allow for straightforward empirical tests. Third, the model has the flexibility to incorporate alternative conceptualizations and to allow consideration of varied and complex patterns of individual and environmental characteristics. However, because little direct empirical evidence relating dimensions of person-environment fit to delinquent behavior is available, we will rely mainly on two sorts of indirect evidence to demonstrate the potential utility of the model: First, we will attempt to illustrate the considerable conceptual overlap between the P-E fit model and a number of traditional theories of delinquent behavior. Second, we will attempt to show that a number of research findings in the delinquency literature may be interpreted in terms of the model. Finally, we will present a few results from two of our own studies of adolescents which bear on school crime and disruption.

Theoretical Support

In our view, one major strength of the person-environment fit model is its capacity to integrate diverse theories found in the extensive literature on delinquency and aggression and in the growing literature on school crime and disruption. A general way to differentiate among such theories (Cortes & Gatti, 1972; Martin & Fitzpatrick, 1964; Mulvihill & Tumin, 1969) is to categorize them as emphasizing either person variables (e.g., psychological) or environment variables (e.g., sociological) in their explanations of criminal and delinquent actions.

Among the many theories which emphasize situational or social defects are a number which include some conception of insufficient opportunities for the gratification of important needs, with resultant opportunity-need incongruence and strain. Such "insufficient opportunity" theories include: (a) those which cite poverty, unemployment, and poor educational opportunities as causes of crime (Burgess, 1952; Rodman, 1968; Shaw & McKay, 1942); (b) those which emphasize the frustrstion of needs for status and success due to the unavailability of legitimate opportunities for upward mobility (Cloward & Ohlin, 1960; Elliott, 1962; Merton, 1957); (c) those which see frustration in general as the main cause of aggressive and violent behavior (Berkowitz, 1962, 1969; Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, &

Sears, 1939); (d) explanations of delinquency and aggression which focus on the frustration of specific needs, such as needs for nurturance and dependency (Bandura & Walters, 1959; Jenkins, 1974; Storr, 1972), excitement and stimulation (Sorrentino, 1975, pp. 24-26), power and control (Marwell, 1966), autonomy and freedom (May, 1953, p. 128), active mastery (Josselyn, 1968), good adult role models (Maslow, 1954), and self-realization (Jordan, 1970); (e) theories which argue that delinquents tend to be higher than average in strength of particular needs, such as the need for excitement and stimulation (Nelson & Farley, 1976; Quay, 1965); (f) tracking (Hargreaves, 1967; Schafer & Olexa, 1971; Stinchcombe, 1964); labeling (Cicourel & Kitsuse, 1968; Gibbons, 1970; Gove, 1975) and school ejection or "push-out" (Edelman, 1975; Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, 1976a, 1976b, 1977) theories, which may be interpreted as involving deprivation of opportunities and frustration of needs for affiliation, full participation, and respect; and (g) explanations which view delinquent behavior and school crime as resulting from the failure of schools to meet students' legitimate needs for achievement and competence, status and recognition, individual autonomy, participation in decision-making, fair discipline, stimulating and relevant activities, and for warm, supportive relationships with friends and school

adults (Alexander, Saylor, & Williams, 1971; DeCecco & Richards, 1975; Fish, 1970; Kvaraceus, 1955). Moreover, though all of the above examples involve insufficient opportunities for need gratification, it may also be hypothesized that excess opportunities to satisfy particular needs provoke delinquent behavior. As noted in our description of the model, this may result when a surplus of opportunity in one area entails deprivation of opportunity in another.

Turning now to theories which emphasize individual or psychological deficits and conflicts, a number involve some notion of insufficient abilities, and ability-demand misfit resulting from failure to meet expectations and requirements for role-appropriate behaviors. Examples which illustrate this include: (a) theories of delinquent behavior which focus on deficiencies in cognitive-intellectual abilities, such as reading aptitude (Barsky, 1966; Silberberg & Silberberg, 1971; Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, 1977), abstract symbolizing ability (Silberberg & Silberberg, 1971), or the capacity for fantasy and daydreaming (Singer, 1976); (b) explanations which emphasize the consequences of deficiencies in ego and superego control abilities (Grossbard, 1962; Redl & Wineman, 1951); (c) causal formulations which highlight the delinquency-provoking role of status frustrations resulting fron an inability to meet pervasive requirements for educational and occupational achievement (Cohen, 1955;

Reiss & Rhodes, 1963; Short & Strodtbeck, 1965); (d) role-inadequacy theories, which see delinquent behavior as resulting from strain associated with the inability successfully to fill a number of social roles (Gold, 1970; Gough, 1948); (e) explanations which include low academic capabilities and school failure as factors provoking or predisposing students to delinquent behavior and school crime (Elliott & Voss, 1974; Empey & Lubeck, 1971; Hirschi, 1969); and (f) theories which see delinquent and disruptive behavior as due to lack of commitment to school, including both classes and activities (Hirschi, 1969; Polk & Halferty, 1966; Stinchcombe, 1964).

We interpret such "commitment theories" as implying a rejection of the legitimacy and importance of school expectations for appropriate performance and participation, resulting in decreased motivation and capability to meet such demands, thereby increasing ability-demand misfit. At the same time, we emphasize that variations in student ability are not the only source of ability-demand incongruence. School boards, superintendents, principals, and teachers also have an obligation to modify their expectations where necessary to achieve better fit between such demands and the varied interests, abilities, and learning styles of students (see Hunt, 1975a).

In summary, we suggest that a broad range of theories

of delinquent behavior and school crime are implicit person-environment fit theories, with the etiological factors they emphasize--insufficient opportunity and ability--being provocations to delinquency precisely because they are incongruent with salient personal needs or pervasive social role demands.

Indirect Empirical Support

Perhaps more important than the conceptual overlap between the P-E fit schema and a variety of other delinquency theories is the model's capacity for synthesizing a broad range of empirical results relating the school experience to delinquent, rebellious, and disruptive behavior by interpreting them in terms of ability-demand or opportunity-need discrepancies on a number of salient dimensions. To illustrate this capability, let us consider briefly some examples of results relevant to these two types of fit, and to selected subtypes of each, based on the dimensions suggested in Figure 2.

The most obvious research findings which illustrate the centrality of the match between individual abilities and requirements of the school are, of course, those which emphasize the relationship between delinquent behavior and academic achievement (e.g., Empey & Lubeck, 1971; Gold, 1963, 1970; Gold & Mann, 1972; Hirschi, 1969; Kaplan, 1975; Noblit, 1976; Polk & Halferty, 1966; Rhodes & Reiss, 1969), along with other requisite skills or abilities

related to academic success, including general aptitude or intelligence (e.g., Palmore, 1967; Reiss & Rhodes, 1961; Short & Strodtbeck, 1965; West,1969) and reading skills (e.g., Glueck & Glueck, 1950; Liddle, 1963; Silberberg & Silberberg, 1971). Indirect evidence for this dimension is available from studies which link perceived academic ability to delinquency (e.g., Frease, 1972; Hindelang, 1973; Hirschi, 1969). Note, however, that the range of skills or abilities required for academic success is actually quite limited (see Boocock, 1972). If, for example, delinquents tend to have low abstract abilities and high concrete skills (Silberg & Silberg, 1971), the potential for incongruence would appear particularly high, since nonabstract thought is not geared to school success. Also relevant here are recent studies which link patterns of delinquent behavior to learning or perceptual disabilities, whereby a child has the mental capacity to master school material but is prevented from doing so by a disorder which hinders his or her ability to learn through traditional teaching techniques (see Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, 1977).

Although fewer and somewhat less direct, there are also empirical results which suggest a relationship between delinquent behavior and institutional or bureaucratic aspects of the student role. For example, as Schafer and Polk (1967,

p. 233) assert, "there is considerable evidence that students who violate school standards pertaining to such things as smoking, truancy, tardiness, dress, classroom demeanor, relations with peers, and respect for authority are more likely to become delinquent than those who conform to such standards" (Erickson, Scott, & Empey, 1964; Havinghurst et al., 1962; Healy & Bronner, 1963; Kvaraceus, 1945; Polk & Richmond, 1972; Simons & Burke, 1966). One might add to this list other transgressions, including carelessness, laziness, inattentiveness, and other "irresponsible" or socially nonconforming behaviors (see e.g., Amoss, 1975; Ferracutti & Dinitz, 1974; Glueck & Glueck, 1950; West, 1969). Also relevant here are the studies which document a general relationship between delinquent or disruptive behavior and lack of involvement in or commitment to the school in general (Hindelang, 1973; Hirschi, 1969; Polk & Halferty, 1966; Thomas, et al., 1977).

Indirect empirical evidence implicating informal/social ability-demand incongruence takes one of two forms. First, a number of studies suggest that delinquent or delinquency-prone adolescents tend to be less popular and have poorer relations with classmates or peers in school (e.g., Ferracutti & Dinitz, 1974; Glueck & Glueck, 1950; Havighurst, et al., 1962; Stott, 1964; West, 1969). Second, studies by Schafer (1969), Hirschi (1969), Kelly and Balch (1971)

and others (see Polk & Schafer, 1972) report a significant relationship between delinquent behavior and participation in extracurricular activities, including athletics. Among other things, such findings document the negative impact of failing to meet pervasive expectations for interpersonal skills and extracurricular participation (see Brookover & Erickson, 1969; Coleman, 1961; Douvan & Gold, 1966; Henry, 1963). Thus, evidence from a wide variety of studies implies that "the inability to successfully cope either on an academic or social level increases the changes of delinquency both in and out of school" (Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, 1977, p. 31).

In turning to a discussion of research illustrating the salience of fit between student needs and opportunities available in the school, it is important to emphasize the great impact of the adolescent's location or relative status within the school milieu on the probability of opportunity-need incongruence on a variety of dimensions. Vinter and Sarri (1965) have reported, for example, that:

> Those who performed below a certain standard received adverse grades and might also be denied, as a direct consequence, a wide variety of privileges and opportunities within the school. They lost esteem among their classmates, they were seldom chosen for minor but prestigeful classroom or school assignments, and they were excluded from participation in certain extracurricular activities. (p. 358)

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Similarly, curriculum or ability tracking, solidly established as a strong correlate of delinquent behavior (see e.g., Hargreaves, 1967; Kelly, 1974, 1975; Schafer & Olexa, 1971), often involves reduced opportunities for educational and occupational advancement, for quality of instruction and teacher expectations, for status and recognition among teachers and other students, and for engagement in certain prestigious and rewarding activities (Schafer & Polk, 1967).

More specifically, however, there are a number of studies which suggest a relationship between delinquency and opportunity-need deficiencies relevant to personal development. Wenk (1974), for example, reviews a variety of studies which suggest that the failure of schools to help students to achieve personal development and growth may play a significant role in the juvenile crime problem. Other studies report that delinquents tend to perceive lower opportunities to achieve success goals than do nondelinquents (e.g., Elliott, 1962; Short, 1964). Moreover, because the typical school reward system (i.e., the grading system) is relatively unresponsive to improvements in performance independent of one's relative standing (McPartland & McDill, 1977), and yet is commonly linked with access to other opportunities for successful performance within the school (Vinter & Sarri, 1965), opportunities for achievement

outside the classroom are also likely to be more limited for delinquency-prone adolescents. If, as some research suggests, delinquents tend to have higher needs for achievement than do nondelinquents (Cortes & Gatti, 1972; Siegman, 1962), a potential link between achievement opportunity-need fit and delinquent behavior seems even more apparent. Finally, there is considerable research evidence that student perceptions of the relevance of school to current interests and to future success and status are related to delinquent and rebellious behavior (e.g., Elliott, 1962; Ferracutti & Dinitz, 1974; Pearl, 1965; Schafer & Polk, 1967; Short, 1964; Stinchcombe, 1964; Thomas, et al., 1977). More indirect evidence is contained in studies of tracking (cited above) and in those which report lower educational or occupational aspirations for delinquents than for nondelinquents (e.g., Caplan, 1974; Gold, 1963; Reiss & Rhodes, 1959b).

Perhaps the most significant research findings which appear to implicate discrepancies between opportunities and needs with regard to relationship dimensions are those which document a relationship between delinquent behavior and warm, supportive relations between teachers and students (e.g., Cardinell, 1969; Ferracutti & Dinitz,

1974; Gold, 1963; Goldman, 1961; Hindelang, 1973; Hirschi, 1969; Thomas, et al., 1977; VandenBerg, 1975). With regard to school vandalism, for example, Cardinell (1969) found that schools tended to have more vandalism problems when their teachers lacked genuine interest in pupils (cf. Gold, 1963), and Goldman (1961) reported that good relationships among administrators, teachers, students, and others (including the school custodian) were associated with low levels of school vandalism. Also relevant here is a recent study by McPartland and McDill (1977) establishing a link between school size and student offenses against persons and property, since increases in size are related not only to a reduction in the number of students who are able to find meaningful academic, athletic, or social roles within the school (Barker & Gump, 1964), but also to a more impersonal and uncaring environment (Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, 1977). Moreover, despite a warning to the contrary (see Moore, 1964, p. 187), Berger (1974) reports an almost total lack of violence in alternative schools, where personalization and humaneness are given highest priority (see Bowman, 1959; Gold, 1978).

Finally, there is some research evidence suggesting the importance of opportunity-need fit relating to

dimensions of system maintenance or change. Although the proposed benefits of smaller or reorganized educational units, as well as those of increased rule clarity (see Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, 1977), are relevant to this dimension, the empirical results currently available pertain primarily to opportunities and needs for student influence or participation in decision-making (e.g., Hoy, 1972; McPartland & McDill, 1974; Shanley, Larson, Myerhoff, Rice, Lefever, & Longstreth, 1961; Strauss, 1974a; Thomas, et al., 1977; Wells, 1971). Of particular note here are recent studies by McPartland and McDill (1974), who report significant relationships between indicators of school stability and student satisfaction with both the content and the process of school decision-making, and by Thomas, et al. (1977), who found feelings of student powerlessness directly related to involvement in delinquency.

Overall, we view the above research findings as illustrating quite convincingly the potential impact of student-school incongruence on student misconduct and delinquent behavior, and we anticipate that future research will provide additional evidence implying the utility of a person-environment fit model for the understanding of school crime and disruption.

Evidence from Two Recent Studies of Adolescents

Throughout our discussion, we have assumed that school crime and delinquent behavior in general may be jointly considered as facets of a unitary phenomenon. As noted earlier, Williams and Gold (1972) report that extensive and sophisticated statistical analyses failed to reveal distinguishable subtypes of or specialization in delinquent behavior. In addition, our own recent analyses, based on a representative national sample of 1367 male and female adolescents aged 11 to 18 (cf. Gold & Reimer, 1975), indicate substantial correlations between an index of 11 self-reported; chargeable delinquent acts committed in or directed against schools and a parallel index of the same 11 acts committed outside of or away from school, both for the total sample (r=+.64) and within four age-by-sex subgroups (r=+.52 to +.63). Moreover, although we had hypothesized that school variables may be stronger predictors of school crime than of delinquency in general, the relationships between school grade point average and the two indices of delinquent behavior were essentially equivalent.

Other analyses more directly related to the relationship between person-environment fit and school misconduct are based on data from a study of adolescents at two Detroit suburban high schools (Douvan, 1973,

1974; Kelly et al., 1977). Klingel (1974), for example, reported significant same-time and cross-time relationships between several measures of person-environment fit and a 16-item self-report index of frequency of aggressive behavior in school in the longitudinal study of adolescent males. Further, many of these relationships appeared to be curvilinear, and, for some, there was evidence that person-environment congruence may have a causal impact on school agression. Similarly, using 10 indices of person-environment fit reflecting the dimensions suggested in Figure 2, Kulks (1974, 1976) found significant associations between these measures and several indices of rebellious behavior in school (agression, rule-breaking, smoking, truancy, and suspension or explusion) for both males and females; moreover, several relationships manifested one of the nonlinear forms specified by the model.

Finally, in recent analyses using the same data, we have found significant relationships between these P-E fit measures and an explicit index of school crime, based on self-reports of vandalism, theft, and fighting with or threatening another student. Specifically, for both males and females, analyses of variance reveal significant relationships between school crime and discrepancies between abilities and demands in the student and affiliative roles, and opportunity-need fit with regard to teacher support.

In addition, for females only, ability-demand fit with respect to more institutional aspects of the student role ad discrepancies between opportunities and needs for school relevance, achievement, affiliation, and student influence are also associated with reports of delinquent acts in school. Again, in several instances these relationships approximate one of the nonlinear functions illustrated in Figure 1.

Implications and Conclusions

Perhaps the most general conclusion to be drawn from the discussion above is that we view the concept of person-environment congruence or fit as a particularly appropriate paradigm for the conceptualization and understanding of delinquent behavior and school crime. Not only is much existing theory and research compatible with this conception, but adoption of this paradigm also offers several other important advantages. In particular, because it defines the problem in terms of the relationship between an individual and his or her environment, the paradigm refracts our attention from either the person or the environment alone to their interaction, implying that successful programs to reduce delinquency and school crime may require accommodation and change by both the individual and the environment (see Sarata, 1976).

A second general conclusion is that our public schools serve not only as a context or setting for crime and disruption, but they also play a major role in the generation of such behavior as a consequence of their unique assignment in society. Moreover, the conceptual model we have suggested speaks directly to the nature of these problems--those of the students as well as those of the schools--and specifies the loci for potential interventions. Because several extensive lists of policy recommendations relevant to these issues have been offered by others in recent years (e.g., Office of Education, 1967; Schafer & Polk, 1967; Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, 1977), we will suggest only a few which appear particularly central to the principles we have identified.

First, our educational systems should provide a wide range of alternative educational settings and alternative teaching styles and learning experiences within conventional school settings, so as to maximize the congruence between student needs and abilities and the opportunities and demands of the school setting throughout the educational sequence. Second, schools should provide several alternative pathways to success so that varying aptitudes, interests, and aspirations are taken into account. In particular, schools should move to eliminate or curtail those procedures which exclude academically faltering students from other

activities which may provide alternative success experiences to those who need them most. Third, schools should increase student access to the educational planning and decision-making process, to the exercise of authority, and to the instructional process. Fourth, schools and society in general should broaden the range of legitimate role opportunities available to adolescents to reduce the problem of prolonged dependence and subordination felt by most youth in our society. Finally, and somewhat predictably, we suggest that serious and systematic research programs be undertaken to increase our knowledge of the relationship between school crime and the school experience, preferably, of course, from a person-environment fit perspective. Ideally, such research efforts should involve substantially more collaboration between education practitioners and social researchers than has been the custom in recent years.

While most of the reforms suggested here and elsewhere have been tried in one form or another during the past decade or so, the principles have all too often been implemented in a haphazard way or without convinction (see West, 1975). Perhaps what has been lacking in these efforts has been an adequate and commonly accpeted paradigm which can be understood and effectively utilized by researchers and educational practitioners alike (see Sarata,

1976). It is our hope that the ideas presented here, along with other contributions in this volume, will help to fill that need.

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